

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 VALLET 00570 211738 Z

46

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ADP-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 USIE-00 T-03 OMB-01 CIAE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 IO-12

EB-11 M-03 A-01 SY-07 RSR-01 /145 W

----- 112696

O 211620 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4107

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE

INFO USCINCPAC IMMEDIATE

IRAKLION CRETE GREECE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

COMAC SCOTT AFB, ST LOUIS, MO IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

COMSIXTHFLT IMMEDIATE

CTF 67 IMMEDIATE

COMNAVINTCOM WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CINCUSNAVEUR IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T VALLETTA 0570

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, PINR, PFOR, LY, MT

SUBJECT: LARAF ATTACK ON USG AIRCRAFT

REF: TRIPOLI 348, 349, 350 (NOTAL)

1. DATT NOTIFIED OF ATTACK ON U. S. AIRCRAFT SOUTH OF MALTA BY RN AND RAF SOURCES AT ABOUT 10:00 LOCAL TIME. FURTHER INFORMED A/C PASSED OVER MALTA AT 0930 ON WAY TO ATHENS.

2. AIR COMMODORE BRIEFED DATT AT 1600 LOCAL TIME:

A. RAF LUQA RCVD VOIC COMM ON INTERNATIONAL DISTRESS

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FREQ FROM USN EC 130, CALL SIGN HAZY 32 AT ABOUT 0800 Z,
REPORTING THAT (1) A/C WAS BEING FIRED ON BY TWO LIBYAN
MIRAGES, (2) HEADING NORTHEAST (3) REQ STEER FOR MALTA.

B. RAF PROVIDED STEER AND MADLIENA RADAR SITE PERSONNEL
WATCHED ATTACK AND REATTACK. FIRST INTERCEPT OCCURRED AT LAT
34 DEGREES 10 NORTH ABOUT THREE MINUTES PRIOR TO MAYDAY.
SECOND DURING MAYDAY CALL AT ABOUT 34 DEGREES 20 NORTH.
THEN MIRAGES APPEARED TO HAVE ESCORTED C130 TO 34 DEGREES
30 NORTH BEFORE BREAKING OFF.

3. RAF ADVISED DIRECTOR OF CIVIL AVIATION (DCA), WHO ALREADY
KNEW OF INCIDENT-- PRESUMABLY FROM INTERCEPT OF MAYDAY BROADCAST.
DCA CLAIMED USN A/C WAS UNDER MADLIENA CONTROL, WHICH RAF,
OF COURSE, DENIED. RAF PROVIDED DCA WITH RECORDING OF ALL
COMMUNICATION INTERCEPTS OF INCIDENT, BUT WITHHELD LATITUDES
OF INTERCEPT. RAF PROVIDING TRANSCRIPTS OF COMMUNICATIONS TO
DATT 22 MARCH.

4. AIR COMMODORE COMMENTED THAT LAR HAS IN PAST ALLEGED
MADLIENA A THREAT TO LAR, AND THEREFORE SOME DIFFICULTY COULD
BE EXPECTED. HOWEVER RAF CONSCIENCE IS CLEAR SINCE AT NO TIME
WAS RAF LUQA IN CONTROL.

5. LOCAL NEWSMEN HAVE HEARD OF ATTACK, PROBABLY FROM CIVAIR
AUTHORITIES, AND ARE PRESSING FOR COMMENT. WE ARE SIMPLY
AFFIRMING THAT WE HAVE HEARD REPORTS TO THAT EFFECT, BUT HAVE
NO DETAILS.

6. WOULD APPRECIATE PRESS GUIDANCE SOONEST. GETZ

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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